

MINUTES OF SPARKWELL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held on 5th August 2026 at HEMERDON VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs May, Davis, Erasmus, Hartley, Serpell Denman, Vinall, Webb, Sophie Jones (Clerk).

In attendance: Cllr Carson (DCC), 2 Members of Public

Part 1 (Open to the Public)

80/26 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Thomas sent his apologies.

81/26 Agreement of the Agenda between Parts I and II

Agreed. Councillors noted that one item of business would be considered in Part II of the meeting.

82/26 Declarations of Interest

Nothing declared.

83/26 Co-option of New Councillors

Cllr Andy Hartley was co-opted onto the council and signed the Declaration in the presence of the clerk.

84/26 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Carson provided an update on the recent Local Government Reorganisation announcement. It was noted that Sparkwell Parish would fall within the proposed new 'Greater Plymouth' authority. An election for the Greater Plymouth Shadow Council is expected to take place in May 2027. South Hams District Council will continue to operate until 31 March 2028, after which responsibility for services will transfer to the new authority.

Cllr Hartley queried whether consideration had been given to the differing needs and characteristics of Plymouth and the surrounding rural parishes. Cllr Carson advised that the detailed arrangements were not yet known but acknowledged the importance of ensuring that essential local services were retained and appropriately represented as the new authority developed.

Cllr Vinall raised concerns regarding the future provision of adult and children's social care services. Cllr Carson noted the significant proportion of Devon County Council's current budget allocated to these services and advised that, as a member of the LGR Scrutiny Committee, he would be involved in scrutinising the transition process.

Cllr May queried how the transition to the new authority would be funded. Cllr Carson provided information regarding the current financial positions and levels of debt held by the relevant principal authorities.

Cllr Vinall queried whether council tax contributions from the 13 parishes could be ringfenced. Concerns were raised regarding the potential distribution of resources within the new authority and the importance of ensuring that funding generated within the outlying parishes continued to support the needs and services of those communities.

Cllr Carson acknowledged the concerns raised and reiterated the importance of ensuring that the interests of the rural and outlying parishes were appropriately represented throughout the Local Government Reorganisation process.

85/26 District Councillor's Report

Cllr Edie was not in attendance but sent his brief prior to the meeting. This was circulated by the Clerk and read out by Cllr May.

It was also noted that Devon County Council have decided to sell Beech Farm which was originally purchased to tackle the concerns regarding the sliproad at Lee Mill. Cllr Carson has requested the money from the sale to be retained for future traffic calming measures within Lee Mill.

Councillors expressed disappointment at the news, as the need for traffic calming at the sliproad is of vital importance. Questions were raised regarding liability and where it falls once DCC has ceased to exist.

86/26 Public Forum

Peter Webb provided an update regarding the proposed reconstitution of Hemerdon Recreation Club. It was noted that the Club's existing constitution was significantly out of date and overly broad, and that the proposed changes would provide greater protection for the trustees.

The Club is currently in the process of reconstituting as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). It was noted that approximately 500 new homes are proposed to be built in Hemerdon, within the Sparkwell Parish boundary, and the intention is to ensure that the Club continues to serve and benefit the residents of Sparkwell.

Peter explained that Sparkwell Parish Council currently holds the deeds for the Hall, car park and Three-Cornered Field as Custodian Trustees. However, CIOs are unable to operate with Custodian Trustees, and alternative arrangements will therefore be required.

Reference was made to concerns previously raised by Cllr May regarding the future of the assets should the CIO cease to operate. It was explained that, in such circumstances, the assets would be transferred to another charity with similar objectives or, where this was not possible, would revert to the original ownership.

RESOLVED – Councillors **RESOLVED** to progress with the transfer of Hemerdon Hall to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

ACTION – Clerk to write a letter to the owner of the parcel of land in Lee Mill.

87/26 Hemerdon Mine

There were no representatives of Tungsten West present. A parishioner was in attendance with concerns regarding the mine.

It was noted that there was a recent Local Liaison Group (LLG) meeting and an announcement from the Environment Agency (EA).

ACTION – Clerk to email Tungsten West regarding missing dust monitor at Sparkwell Hall and check if Hemerdon Hall should also have one. Also, clerk to request the dust monitoring reports.

ACTION – Sparkwell Parish Council to draft a letter to chief regulator's group requesting reasons for decision and to share information. Can the minutes from the LLG be shared?

ACTION – Request for the EA to install monitoring equipment independent of Tungsten West.

88/26 Planning

- a. 1841/26/VPO – No comments

89/26 Minutes

- a. Councillors considered the minutes of the Parish Council meetings on Wednesday 10th June 2026. The meetings were unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

90/26 Road Warden

Cllr Vinall has walked Sparkwell with Cllrs May and County Councillor Carson. They discussed traffic calming and roads that need improvement. It was noted that the signs for the playground and school have been cleared of branches and dirt by Cllr Vinall. Cllr Carson has a list of places which need white lines reinstated. A Give Way sign was missing and needs to be replaced urgently.

91/26 Updates from ongoing projects - to receive any updates from local ongoing projects

No updates.

92/26 To review Park Inspection Report – to discuss and review the report and take any action as deemed necessary.

The Park Inspection Report was noted and action taken for clerk to progress with new swings.

93/26 Chairman's Business

Sparkwell Hall has been in contact with Cllr May to discuss the works at Sparkwell playground.

94/26 Correspondence

Clerk has circulated all correspondence prior to the meeting.

- a. To plan a new meeting date for October.

The October meeting date will be Wednesday 14th October 2026.

It was also agreed to add Cllrs Hartley and Erasmus to the banking.

ACTION – Clerk to add Councillors Hartley and Erasmus to the bank account.

95/26 Finance

- a. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the budget analysis report and bank reconciliation for July 2026 and August 2026.
- b. Cllrs reviewed and **RESOLVED** to approve the payments list for July 2026 and August 2026.
- c. To review Risk Register and List of Assets.
 - This was deferred for the next meeting.

96/26 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at **7pm** on **Wednesday 2nd September** at **Hemerdon Village Hall**.

Meeting closed at 21.19pm

This is a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed

Name Date